

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) A method for forwarding packets to a network, comprising the steps of:

providing a packet forwarding system with a memory, said packet forwarding system being connected to the network;

receiving an analog signal and generating local audio packets;

receiving packets at the packet forwarding system including local audio packets and storing the packets in the memory of the packet forwarding system;

attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network;

establishing one or more time limit within which to forward packets stored in the memory to the network with the time limit linked to the type of the data included in the packet;

monitoring an elapsed period of time while attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network;

canceling said attempting to forward a packet stored in the memory to the network, when the elapsed period of time exceeds the time limit associated with the type of the data included in the packet; and

The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of allowing transmission of the

packet stored in the memory to be completed when that packet is currently being transmitted over the network.

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4. (Currently amended) A method for forwarding packets to a network, comprising the steps of:

providing a packet forwarding system with a memory, said packet forwarding system being connected to the network;

receiving an analog signal and generating local audio packets;

receiving packets at the packet forwarding system including local audio packets and

storing the packets in the memory of the packet forwarding system;

attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network;

establishing one or more time limit within which to forward packets stored in the memory to the network with the time limit linked to the type of the data included in the packet;

monitoring an elapsed period of time while attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network;

canceling said attempting to forward a packet stored in the memory to the network, when the elapsed period of time exceeds the time limit associated with the type of the data included in the packet; and

The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of interrupting transmission of the packet stored in the memory when that packet is currently being transmitted over the network.

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3. (Currently amended) A method for forwarding packets to a network, comprising the steps of:

providing a packet forwarding system with a memory, said packet forwarding system being connected to the network;

receiving an analog signal and generating local audio packets;

receiving packets at the packet forwarding system including local audio packets and storing the packets in the memory of the packet forwarding system;

attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network;

establishing one or more time limit within which to forward packets stored in the memory to the network with the time limit linked to the type of the data included in the packet;

monitoring an elapsed period of time while attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network; and

canceling said attempting to forward a packet stored in the memory to the network, when the elapsed period of time exceeds the time limit associated with the type of the data included in the packet; and

*cont*  
*a period of time for additional attempts*  
~~The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of resetting a timer to allow additional attempts to forward the packet stored in the memory when that packet is not currently being transmitted over the network.~~

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4. (Currently amended) A method for forwarding packets to a network, comprising the steps of:

providing a packet forwarding system with a memory, said packet forwarding system being connected to the network;

receiving an analog signal and generating local audio packets;

receiving packets at the packet forwarding system including local audio packets and storing the packets in the memory of the packet forwarding system;

attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network;

establishing one or more time limit within which to forward packets stored in the memory to the network with the time limit linked to the type of the data included in the packet;

monitoring an elapsed period of time while attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network; and

canceling said attempting to forward a packet stored in the memory to the network, when the elapsed period of time exceeds the time limit associated with the type of the data included in the packet; and

The method of claim 1, further comprising replacing the packet stored in memory with a new packet including the same data as the replaced packet when it is determined to cancel the forwarding of the stored packet.

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7. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[1]] 6 wherein: said new packet includes different data than the replaced packet when it is determined to cancel the forwarding of the stored packet.

7. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the packet stored in memory includes time-sensitive data and protocol-related data, and the new packet has the same time-sensitive data and different protocol-related data as the replaced packet.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 further comprising the steps of:  
resetting a back-off level; and  
attempting to forward the new packet to the network.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 further comprising the steps of:  
initiating attempts to transmit the new packet to the network; and  
resetting the elapsed period of time.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the packet stored in memory includes time-sensitive data and the step of replacing the packet stored in memory with a new packet can occur a predetermined maximum number of times.

11. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the packet stored in memory includes time-sensitive data and protocol-related data, and the new packet has different time-sensitive data and the same protocol-related data as the replaced packet.

13. (Currently amended) A method for forwarding packets to a network, comprising

the steps of:

providing a packet forwarding system with a memory, said packet forwarding system being connected to the network;

receiving an analog signal and generating local audio packets;

receiving packets at the packet forwarding system including local audio packets and

storing the packets in the memory of the packet forwarding system;

attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network;

establishing one or more time limit within which to forward packets stored in the memory to the network with the time limit linked to the type of the data included in the packet;

monitoring an elapsed period of time while attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to the network; and

canceling said attempting to forward a packet stored in the memory to the network, when the elapsed period of time exceeds the time limit associated with the type of the data included in the packet. The method of Claim 1 wherein the steps of monitoring, establishing the time limit, and determining whether to cancel forwarding the packet stored in memory occur only when the packet stored in the memory includes time-sensitive data.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously presented) A method for forwarding packets to a network, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a packet forwarding system with a memory, said packet forwarding system being connected to the network;

5 creating a first packet at the packet forwarding system and storing said first packet in said memory of said packet forwarding system;

attempting to forward said first packet stored in said memory to the network;

establishing a time limit within which to forward said first packet stored in said memory to the network;

10 monitoring an elapsed period of time during said attempting to forward said first packet stored in said memory to the network;

canceling said attempting to forward said first packet stored in said memory to the network when said elapsed period of time exceeds said time limit and said first packet has not been forwarded;

15 creating a second packet at said packet forwarding system after said creating of said first packet, said creating of said second packet including combining data of said first packet with additional data to create data for said second packet;

replacing said first packet in said memory with said second packet after said canceling; attempting to forward said second packet to the network after said replacing.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising:

establishing a time limit within which to forward said second packet stored in said memory to the network;

monitoring an elapsed period of time during said attempting to forward said second packet stored in said memory to the network;

canceling said attempting to forward said second packet stored in said memory to the network when said elapsed period of time exceeds said time limit and said second packet has not been forwarded;

creating a third packet at said packet forwarding system, said creating of said third packet includes combining data of said second packet with additional data to create data for said third packet;

replacing said second packet in said memory with said third packet after said canceling; attempting to forward said third packet to the network after said replacing.

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18. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim 17, further comprising: limiting a number of steps of said combining of data from a previous packet with additional data to below a predetermined retry maximum.

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19. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising: finishing forwarding said first packet if said first packet is being forwarded when said elapsed period of time exceeds said time limit.



<sup>15</sup>  
20. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim <sup>11</sup>~~15~~, further comprising:  
interrupting forwarding said first packet if said first packet is being forwarded when said  
elapsed period of time exceeds said time limit.

<sup>16</sup>  
21. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim <sup>11</sup>~~15~~, wherein:  
said creating of said second packet includes creating new data for said second packet.

<sup>17</sup>  
22. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim <sup>11</sup>~~15~~, wherein:  
said steps of monitoring, establishing said time limit, and canceling forwarding of said first  
packet occur only when said first packet includes time-sensitive data.

<sup>18</sup>  
23. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim <sup>11</sup>~~15~~, wherein:  
said creating of said first packet is performed using local audio as a data portion of the packet.

<sup>19</sup>  
24. (Canceled)

<sup>19</sup>  
25. (Currently amended) A method in accordance with claim <sup>11</sup>~~15~~ <sup>11</sup>~~16~~, wherein:  
said forwarding of said workstation packets to the network is interrupted during said  
attempting to forward said first packet to the network.

<sup>20</sup>  
26. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim <sup>19</sup>~~25~~, wherein:

said creating of said first packet is performed using local audio as a data portion of the packet;

said creating of said second packet includes combining data of said first packet with additional local audio to create data for said second packet.

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27. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

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said attempting includes waiting for a free period on the network and forwarding said first packet to the network during a first said free period.

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28. (Canceled)

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29. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising:  
receiving another packet at said packet forwarding system from another network, said network and said another network having separate collision domains.

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30. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein said step of receiving packets includes receiving a packet at said packet forwarding system from a network collision domain that is different from the collision domain associated with the forwarding device.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Canceled)

33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously presented) A network method for forwarding packets, the method comprising:

providing a device with a local audio source and a packet controller for forming local audio packets;

5 providing a packet forwarding device with a memory, said packet forwarding device being connected to the device and being connected to a first collision domain and a second collision domain;

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10 receiving packets at the packet forwarding device from the device, from the first collision domain and from the second collision domain and storing the packets in the memory of the packet forwarding system;

providing a time limit for local audio packets to be held in the memory;

attempting to forward packets stored in the memory to any one of the device and the first collision domain and the second collision domain;

15 monitoring an elapsed period of time while attempting to forward the local audio packet stored in the memory to one of the first collision domain and the second collision domain; and

canceling said attempting to forward the local audio packet stored in the memory to the one of the first collision domain and the second collision domain, wherein said audio packet contains time sensitive audio data and no time limit or a different time limit is established for packets received from one of said first collision domain and said second collision domain other than for packets received with audio data.

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36. (Previously presented) A method in accordance with claim 24, wherein the device  
with a local audio source and the packet forwarding device and memory are part of a network  
telephone device and the first collision domain is in one of a local area network, wide area  
network and internet protocol network and the second collision domain is a connected  
computer device.

36. (Canceled)